

Application No.: 10/621,682

Docket No.: 65042-0431

**LISTING OF THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims as following:

1. (Currently Amended) A support assembly for use with a vehicle article carrier comprising:

a one-piece support having a base portion adapted to be selectively proximate a vehicle surface;

a rail portion remotely spaced from said base portion and said vehicle surface;

a first attachment mechanism being associated with said support; and

a cover, said cover having a second attachment mechanism engaging said first attachment mechanism to secure said cover to said support;

wherein said rail portion includes an ear integral with said side wall, said ear being deformed into mating engagement with a plug to compressingly retain it within said support.

2. (Previously Presented) A support assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein said support includes a pair of sidewalls maintained in a spaced relationship by a web disposed therebetween, said sidewalls extending upwardly from said web, said sidewalls and said web defining said base portion and said rail portion.

3. (Previously Presented) A support assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein said support is formed from stamped metal.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

6. (Original) A support assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein said cover is removably connected to said support

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7. (Previously Presented) A support assembly for use with a vehicle article carrier comprising: a one-piece support having a base portion; a rail portion; a first attachment mechanism being associated with said support; and a cover, said cover having a second attachment mechanism engaging said first attachment mechanism to secure said cover to said support; wherein said first attachment mechanism and said second attachment mechanism comprises at least one of receiving holes and a male protrusion adapted to be received therein.
8. (Previously Presented) A support assembly for use with a vehicle article carrier comprising: a one-piece support having a base portion; a rail portion; a first attachment mechanism being associated with said support; and a cover, said cover having a second attachment mechanism engaging said first attachment mechanism to secure said cover to said support; wherein said first attachment mechanism comprises at least one of a groove and a tab adapted to be matingly engaged therewith.
9. (Original) A support assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein said sidewalls and said web define a channel and said cover substantially covers said support including closing said channel, thereby protecting said support from environmental conditions.
10. (Original) A support assembly as recited in claim 1 further including a gasket affixed to a bottom of said support
11. (Original) A support assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein a plurality of covers of differing shape may be used with a single support.
12. (Original) A support assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein said support is stamped metal.
13. (Original) A support assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein said support is molded.
14. (Original) A support assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein said support is die-cast.
15. (Canceled)
16. (Canceled)

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17. (Canceled)

18. (Canceled)

19. (Canceled)

20. (Canceled)

21. (Canceled)

22. (Canceled)

23. (Canceled)

24. (Canceled)

25. (Canceled)

26. (Canceled)

27. (Canceled)

28. (Currently Amended) A support assembly as recited in claim 29[[27]], wherein said ears are deformable for engaging said adapter component.

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29. (Previously Presented) A support assembly for use with a vehicle article carrier comprising: a one-piece support having a generally U-shaped cross-section, said U-shape defined by sidewalls and a web extending therebetween, said support having a base portion and a rail portion, wherein said web in said base portion has at least one pedestal extending from a bottom of said U-shape and defining at least one hole therethrough for affixing said support to the vehicle, and further wherein said rail portion is generally angled with respect to said base portion such that an end opposite from said base portion is generally parallel to and spaced from said web of said base portion, said opposite end of said rail portion further including ears; an adapter component received in said opposite end of said rail portion and at least partially retained by said ears and partially retained by said sidewalls and said web; a gasket affixed to a bottom of said support; and a cover extending over said support and engaged thereto; wherein said adapter component is a plug having a non-symmetrical cross-section for preventing rotation of said plug with respect to said support.

30. (Currently Amended) A support assembly as recited in claim [[27]] 29, wherein said adapter component is press fit into said rail portion.

31. (Currently Amended) A support assembly as recited in claim [[27]] 29, wherein said gasket defines a central aperture therethrough and further wherein said at least one pedestal extends through said central aperture.

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32. (Previously Presented) A support assembly for use with a vehicle article carrier comprising: a one-piece support having a generally U-shaped cross-section, said U-shape defined by sidewalls and a web extending therebetween, said support having a base portion and a rail portion, wherein said web in said base portion has at least one pedestal extending from a bottom of said U-shape and defining at least one hole therethrough for affixing said support to the vehicle, and further wherein said rail portion is generally angled with respect to said base portion such that an end opposite from said base portion is generally parallel to and spaced from said web of said base portion, said opposite end of said rail portion further including ears; an adapter component received in said opposite end of said rail portion and at least partially retained by said ears and partially retained by said sidewalls and said web; a gasket affixed to a bottom of said support; and a cover extending over said support and engaged thereto; wherein said gasket includes at least one deformable male protrusion engaging openings defined by said web in said base portion.

33. (Currently Amended) A support assembly as recited in claim [[27]] 29, wherein said cover includes a plurality of male protrusions engaging a plurality of like spaced openings in said sidewalls of said support.